NEGRO SLAVERY.

10.

No. XVII.

ATTEMPT TO ENLIST RELIGION ON THE SIDE OF COLONIAL SLAVERY EXPOSED.

THE following article is extracted, with a few verbal alterations, from the Christian Observer of June 1830, being a review of a small pamphlet published by Ridgway, and bearing this title, "Representation of the State of the Government Slaves and Apprentices in the Mauritius, with observations by a Resident, who has never possessed either Land or Slaves in the Colony."

Our only reason for noticing this pamphlet is, that the author has impressed religion into the service of slavery. We can listen with comparative forbearance while a man tells us that his interest is involved in this nefarious institution; that the emancipation of slaves would cut off two courses from his table, and abridge his daughters' portions; but we feel little tolerance when he adds that his Christianity does not revolt against the flagrant injustice of the whole system. Our author dedicates his labours to a pious and benevolent nobleman, Lord Mountsandford: his wish is, he says, to promote "the best interests of the Negro Slaves in the Mauritius;" he would have persons deal kindly with their slaves; he would even gradually commute post-horses into palfreys; but beyond this he would not go: for he says,

"We reject the inference that the renunciation of slavery is a religious or moral duty;—we utterly deny the conclusion that Christianity demands of the nation that violation of justice, and good faith, and sound political wisdom, which is connected with the suicidal measure of abolition." pp. 45, 46.

Christianity demands no violation of "justice, good faith, or political wisdom." But none of these are in favour of slavery, but quite the contrary; for nothing is more unjust, perfidious, or impolitic, than West-Indian slavery: it is one tissue of injustice, perfidy, and political "suicide."

We wish no stronger arguments against slavery than the apologies of its abettors, most of all of its religious and clerical abettors. This pamphlet would furnish them by scores; but we have gone over the ground so often that we shall not weary our readers with a lengthened detail, but shall merely copy a few passages, with a brief comment. Our author is not pleased with those who disparage that slave elysium, the Mauritius; but his own panegyrics upon this paradise of bondage leave no very glowing impression upon our minds. In his representations of the miserable destitution of the slaves as respects their religious culture (though he sees compara-

tively little to alter for the better in their worldly condition), he exhibits in no very honourable light the character of those who call themselves their masters. There are, he says, in the Mauritius, 1294 government slaves, and 2010 apprentices. Of the former, the slaves, he informs us, that

"Nearly the whole of these slaves have been long destitute of any religious instruction; nor has any attempt been made to educate their children, until about five or six weeks ago, when (much to the honour of his Excellency Sir Charles Colville's administration) a Coloured Creole was hired to discharge the function of a catechist two hours each day, for about seventy children. Prayers are also read by him to the adults on the Sunday, and the military chaplain performs Divine service for their benefit once a month. Laudable as this beginning is, it must certainly be allowed to be 'the infancy of things;' for, when the grossly ignorant and immoral state of the adult slaves thus long abandoned is considered, it is evident, that 'precept upon precept,' and 'line upon line,' and the most unremitting assiduity must be necessary, if any moral or religious effect is expected: and it is equally certain, that however admirable the character, and however endowed with pre-eminent qualifications for teaching, the preacher may be, slow progress could be hoped from a monthly lecture. But it is presumed, that the laborious duties of a military chaplain in a tropical climate (where there are two garrisons, thirty miles apart, besides detached outposts, and the schools and hospitals of three regiments to visit) will be considered an ample sphere for any clergyman, and prove that, unless he were to neglect the important duties of his specific appointment, a mere fragment of time is the utmost that he could devote to the slaves." pp. 10, 11.

Of the apprentices, he gives the following account:—

"The apprentices are those Negroes who have been rescued from slave ships since the abolition of the Slave Trade, and are bound by the collector of the customs for the period of fourteen, and latterly for seven years to private individuals, who, by the indentures they sign, engage to teach them a trade or occupation by which they may earn a livelihood, 'to provide them with all things needful for their comfort,' and also, 'as conveniently as may be, to instruct, or cause them to be taught and instructed in the Christian religion, and when instructed to be taken to be baptized, and to permit and encourage them to attend public worship." pp. 11, 12.

Our author, of course, gives the employers handsome credit for performing the first of these stipulations; but he is forced to admit a mournful account of the latter.

"There is reason to fear, that the latter part of the engagement made by masters is almost nugatory. In the first place, there is no specific teacher, or public worship, by which the apprentices can benefit." p. 12.

"If it is supposed that, by private instruction in his master's family, the apprentice may receive the benefit contemplated in the indenture, there are many obstacles to be considered. A master must entertain more than an ordinary value for the Christian religion, to devote the necessary time, and to persevere with patience in the laborious task of penetrating the intellect of a densely ignorant Negro, and imbuing his mind and heart with the sublime and practical principles of Christianity. And it is believed, the instances are rare in which even an attempt has been made." pp. 13, 14.

"It may, therefore, be roundly stated, that the apprentices are also destitute of any adequate religious instruction." p. 14.

Where one half of the duty is thus violated without scruple, we have little confidence in the good faith with which the remainder is fulfilled, except so far as it suits the master's pecuniary interest to fulfil it. We attach as little credit to the averments respecting the temporal comfort of the Mauritius slaves as we should to a glowing account of their religious instruction. Against the anonymous statements of the "Resident," there are in this country the positive minute declarations of some hundreds of eye-witnesses attesting the extreme cruelty with which slaves are treated in this elysium. For a fearful sample of these depositions, our readers may refer to various papers on Mauritius Slavery in the Anti-Slavery Reporter. (Nos. 3, 42, 44, 49, 50, 51, 52, and 62.) But the half has not been told; and in particular the witnesses are very explicit as to the frequent destitution of the enslaved population, in regard to those very "comforts" —including the bare necessaries of life—which the Resident considers their common lot. Their condition is in fact as miserable as miserable can be. But were it otherwise,

were they fed with luxuries, and chained on beds of roses, the great atrocity would be still the same. You have no right to chain them at all; you have no right to claim their unwilling services: the same God made them that made you, and gave them the same freedom; and who are you that dare to stamp the brand of slavery on the brow of your brother, whom he created your equal? There is to our minds something most supercilious, to say the least, in the manner in which colonial "residents," and some among ourselves are accustomed to speak of their fellow-creatures in the matter of slavery, even when professing to better their condition. Their very benevolence is insulting. Take, for example, the following passage from our author, who is an advocate for affording religious culture to the slaves.

"Shall the author, then, be accused of turning away from the spectacle of human misery, 'passing by on the other side,' and leaving the slave in his wretchedness? Has he no bowels of compassion, or has a residence in the tropics seared his heart, and withered all the kindly sympathies of his nature? God being his witness, he cherishes no vulgar prejudices against 'the tincture of a skin;' and his heart owns no distinction of 'bond or free;' he entertains no unfavourable opinion of the Negro; but in contemplating his moral condition feels 'the link of brotherhood uncut;' and that 'Love Divine has paid one price for all;' and he would gladly admit him to share in every blessing of the common Maker; but he would not blindly run along with the stream of popular excitement, nor bound his charity by any limits of partial application; and it is on the important duty of uniting *a judicious exercise of benevolence to the slave*, with the obligation of even-handed justice to the master, that he has urged his observations, and would once more endeavour to illustrate his views. As the colossal giant of eastern woods is lured within the fenced enclosure, and urged onward within narrower limits, until a barrier is opposed to his retreat; and he is then subjected to privation and accustomed to his future keeper, and trained until the docile instinct of the noble animal almost rivals human intelligence, and, his savage nature thus tamed, he may at length be safely enlarged for the useful service of man. Thus we have found the Negro within the moral pale of slavery." pp. 55, 56.

Can any thing be more insulting than this? A man asks for the common rights which God gave him, which an act of piracy wrested from him, which injustice and tyranny still withhold; and our Resident turns round and talks of what he would do, and what he would not do for him: he would "exercise judicious benevolence." Benevolence! the man asks not your supercilious benevolence; he asks for his rights; he asks you to throw away the whip, and the brand, and the fetter: but in your Christian benevolence you retain all these, and make him work for you against his will; and coolly and superciliously prate of what you would and would not do for his benefit. And after all this insulting parade of religion and humanity, the real fact comes out incidentally: you want a beast of burden, a tame elephant; and you view your Black brother, for whom "Divine Love has paid the price" of the blood of the incarnate Son of God, much as you do that "colossal giant of the woods," whom you drive into your toils and accustom to "privation" and "a keeper," that his nature may be "tamed," and he may "at length be safely enlarged" for your "useful service." Can the reader feign or fancy a similitude more base and degrading than this towards a being created in the image of God, with "the link of brotherhood" to bind him, not merely to his White oppressors, but to the celestial intelligences that circle the Eternal Throne? And yet our "Resident" writes religiously, and complains that slaves are not religiously instructed. Who teaches his horses, or cows, or "tame elephants" religion? But the whole strain of the argument is in a tone of usurped authority, which no man has a right to hold in reference to his fellow-creatures.

"*He* would admit *him*." Who are the "he" and the "him;" and has not the "him" as much right to talk of what he would condescend

to do for the "he" as vice versa? What but the law of the strongest makes the difference?

The allusion to a wild beast tamed for "the useful service of man" is not casual; for the author proceeds with it as follows, and in what we must still call the same insulting language; and not the less insulting for its taking the cast of religious thought.

"To the free-born inhabitant of civilized lands, alive to the value of personal privilege and to the humiliation of political thraldom, the limits may appear contracted and the discipline severe; but the vicissitudes of savage life, and impressions of early misfortune and lengthened habit, have happily so fortified the nature and blunted the sensibilities of the bondsman, that 'the iron' seldom 'enters his soul.' Though we will gladly repress all unnecessary rigour, and spread around his situation every mitigation that humanity can require; yet we will not yield to the fancies of sentimentalism, nor, in compliance with the demand of a partial and overstrained philanthropy, break down the fence which confines him, and turn him loose to trample down civil order, and spread desolation over the face of society; but we will meet him in his bonds, with the law of kindness in our hearts, and the Gospel of peace upon our lips; we will pour into his wounded spirit the balm of heavenly consolation, and ply him with all the renovating principles of Religious Truth; and if we do not achieve miracles of light and virtue, we shall certainly smooth the asperities of savage nature, and extinguish many elements of moral and political disorder." pp. 56, 57.

Are we not warranted in calling this language insulting? The author says we are to meet the slave in his bonds—how? to snap them asunder?—Oh no, but "with the law of kindness in our hearts and the Gospel of peace upon our lips." And what cares the slave for the law of kindness in our hearts while our hands grasp as firmly as ever the chain that binds him? what cares he for our puling about "the Gospel of peace" with our lips, when in our lives we prove ourselves oppressors of the weak and wretched, and refuse to let the captive go free? He asks justice, and we insult him with pity. When torn from his family, worn down with his toils, and pining with a broken heart for death to deliver him from his wrongs, can any thing be more "insulting"—we keep to the word—than to tell him, that "happily his sensibilities are so blunted," that wretchedness is not wretchedness to him; "the iron seldom enters" his callous soul; home, and father, and mother, and wife, and children, and freedom, and all that to other men is fraught with heart-stirring affections, is to him but an unmeaning name? No, he has none of these idle susceptibilities; we will not indulge him in any such vagaries of "sentimentalism" and "overstrained philanthrophy;" but what will we do? "*we will ply him with all the renovating principles of religious truth.*" We will prate and preach, but not practise; we will boast of our faith, but take good care it shall never evaporate into good works; we will not give him his rights; we will withhold from him all that renders life, so far as this world is concerned, valuable; but we will give him, oh we will give him, yes we will give him, "the balm of heavenly consolation," to compensate for the want of them. The balm of heavenly consolation he would need as a human being, and he doubly needs it as a slave; and inestimable is the boon, and tenfold the crime that this is *not* given to him, as our author himself admits. But even if it were given to him, which it is not; if every estate had a chaplain and a catechist; the man is a slave still, and subject to the horrors and the oppressions of slavery. We ought to give the slave the blessings of religion; but the fallacy of our author, and of those who think like him, is that doing one duty is a substitute for two; that a profession of religious zeal will be an acceptable offering at the bar of God for the absence of common justice and humanity; that we may lawfully oppress men and make them slaves, if we only smatter a little religion to them, which, with the Bible in one hand and the whip in the other, they are

of course very likely to embrace. True, we ought to give the slave "the balm of heavenly consolation," and it is a black spot upon the colonies and the mother country that we have not done it; but not as a commutation for his liberty. To offer such a compromise is the bitterest mockery of his sufferings, and the most likely way to make him hate Christianity as much as he hates a White man. This is a refinement of "sentimentalism" and "overstrained philanthrophy," which we gladly consign to our Mauritius Resident: the abolitionists wish for something better; they want not mere professions of faith but good works. Our author unjustly accuses them of undervaluing religious instruction for the slaves. Undervalue it? who but they have been its chief promoters? who have so strongly spoken of the guilt of neglecting it? But what they *do* undervalue and utterly reject is the cant of religion without justice; a base code of pretended Christianity, that is not at war with the tyranny and injustice of slavery. They undervalue words without deeds; they undervalue the professed Christian love which views one class of human beings as wild beasts, to be tamed for the service of another; and to be insulted with specious words, while they are in fact the victims of oppresion and wrong. Our author generally suggests the inquiries

"to these religious and benevolent persons, who have long advocated the cause of the Colonial Slaves, whether, in the ardour of a generous anxiety to raise them from their 'low estate,' an undue pre-eminence has not been given to certain civil and secular benefits of a questionable character?—and if, latterly, religious intruction and practicable means of communicating it, do not seem thrown into the shade, and the Negro's interest in an awful eternity merged in oblivion?" p. 20.

We confidently answer, No, to both these inquiries. Are such men as Mr. Wilberforce, for example, or such women as Hannah More, less anxious than a Mauritius Resident for the souls of the slaves, because they remember that they have bodies also; and that their very souls, as well as their bodies, are enslaved, by the tyranny that fast binds them in misery and iron? They say that a slave colony never will or can be a virtuous, and religious, and happy colony. They say frankly that they have not the least faith in the pretence of making the slaves, as a body, religious, under the auspices of those who retain them as slaves. Missionaries and other benevolent individuals may do something, it is true, in detached quarters; and we bless God, and congratulate the poor slave, even for this partial benefit; but their efforts are constantly thwarted by the direful system under which their converts drag out their weary existence; and the planters know full well that if the whole body of slaves were educated up to the point that qualified them to become intelligent, as well as devout Christians, slavery would not endure an hour. If all the colonists would only consent that every person on their estates should be educated just sufficiently to read and understand the Bible, we should have no doubt as to the result, provided the mother country did not interfere to uphold the puny master, with his whips and his stocks, against his mentally disenthralled victim. The colonists know this; and most politically withhold the elements of cultivation from their slaves; and will not thank our "Resident" for enforcing this point, though he has gilded and honeyed the pill with much censure upon the abolitionists, and a defence of slavery.

Our professedly benevolent author, in the passage last quoted, speaks of the "civil and secular benefits" sought for the slaves, as being of "a questionable character." But he finds nothing questionable in being free himself; and if he were captured by an Algerine pirate, and carried into slavery, he would see nothing questionable in regaining his "civil and secular benefits." And what difference is there in the

two cases? God has made all men of one blood; but, unhappily, too many who call themselves Christians and profess to respect the first table of the law, utterly forget the second —"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:" "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them." Would our author wish to put himself into his Black neighbour's place? or does he love him as himself while he seeks to rivet on him the chains of slavery?

But it is the wrong done to our holy religion which most displeases us in such publications as that under review. Our author says:

"The Christian religion seems not to have been intended for the Utopian world of the amiable and devout theorist, or to have held forth that promise of complete triumph among frail and mortal men, which is expected by the rapt Millenarian; for (to use the imagery of the Scriptures) 'we have this treasure in earthen vessels,' and, 'when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?' But it seems to have been the 'Tree of healing' cast into the bitter waters of human life; designed, not to new-mould the form of civil society by any unbending system of ethical or religious polity, but by sanctifying and purifying the individual men brought under its influence in the actual conditions of life as they exist in the order of Providence,—gradually to sweeten and ameliorate the institutions of the world." p. 45.

It seems then that Christianity is just good to bind men, but not to release them. It is good to make slaves obedient; but not to make their self-styled masters just. It is "gradually to sweeten and ameliorate the institutions of the world;" but *so* gradually that the present race of slaves, and the next, and so on, *ad infinitum*, are to taste none of its sweetness. Never mind in your own particular case being hanged; for very likely they will not hang all your great grand-children. Society will improve; but do not be such a "rapt Millenarian" as to wish that yourself, or those you love, shall partake of the blessing. O delightful words to the oppressed victim of Mauritius brutality, that the Mauritius shall not be for aye a charnel house of horrors as at present! But stop, you slave, not so fast: a Christian community would be shocked at the impiety of antedating this "gradual" blessing; and therefore, for your life and mine, and your children's after you, things shall go on as they do; and now, as soon as you have repeated the Lord's Prayer and the Belief which I taught you, bare your back that I may shew you who is master. Our Resident's language, translated into English, amounts nearly to this.

St. Paul, of course, comes in for his share of the burden; for a religious defence of slavery without the Epistle to Philemon to back it would be an anomaly.

"St. Paul says nothing to slaves about snapping the chain; but after exhorting 'every man to abide in the same calling wherein he was called,' adds, 'Art thou called, being a slave, care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.' It will be allowed, there is some little difference between the slave being made free and snapping the chain himself. And was not the example of the Apostle in harmonious agreement with his doctrine? Having converted the runaway slave Onesimus, 'as a proof on the part of his convert of penitent humility, and on his own of impartial equity, he sends him back to his master, Philemon.' He would gladly have retained his affectionate services, 'to have ministered unto him in the bonds of the Gospel;' but 'rectitude with St. Paul was always the prevailing principle'—his zeal for his convert, and a regard for his own conscience, 'never made him lose sight of the duty of restitution.' Both the slave and the master owed their salvation to him,—both were members of the Christian church,—yet he does not hint at severing the civil tie that connected them, or dissolving their relative situation by any imaginary theory of the 'rights of man,' or the abstract injustice of slavery. Doubtless the tenor of his parting admonition to Onesimus was similar to this, 'Let as many slaves (δουλοι) as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour; that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren, but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit.' (1 Tim. vi. 1 & 2.) And then pouring forth his affectionate heart in a fervent recommendation of the penitent slave, and committing him in a strain of the most touching pathos to the Christian benevolence of his master, he leaves him

un-emancipated! We know that, on account of 'the hardness of their hearts,' the Jews were permitted some relaxations of the perfect moral law, which the uncompromising purity of the Christian dispensation has entirely rescinded; and therefore, in justification of the continuance of slavery, we would never allege the authority of Moses, or the example of God's chosen people; but, if there were that inherent impiety and moral turpitude in the system which the unmeasured statements of many good men seem to assert, it is incomprehensible how the Apostles could leave the Primitive Church in so grievous an error! We perceive at once, that the Slave Trade would have met their abhorrence, for 'men-stealers' are ranked in a catalogue of crime with 'murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers;' and their frequent admonitions to masters show that they never gave the least countenance to the abuse of slavery." pp. 71, 72.

By an extraordinary misapplication of I Corinthians x. 25, it has been attempted to be proved, that Christians are at liberty to purchase and partake of any article of consumption which is exposed to sale in the market, though they may be well aware that it is the produce of gross injustice, inhumanity, and oppression. The apologists of colonial slavery, and the consumers of luxuries, the produce of slave labour, scruple not to claim this holy Apostle as a vindicator of their principles and practice. It is true, that St. Peter tells us, that in his Epistles there are "some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction;" but we may confidently believe, that St. Peter, whatever he might refer to, never contemplated the possibility of such a wresting of any part of those admirable writings as should make them give countenance to any thing so atrociously wicked as Colonial Slavery! And what would have been the feelings of St. Paul himself, had he foreseen that, in after-ages, his authority would be cited by the advocates of slavery in favour of their unrighteous principles: as though they designed, that he should be pre-eminently not the Apostle of the Gentiles, but the Apostle of the slave-holders? What holy indignation would this abuse of his name have wrought in him! Yea, what clearing of himself! "Yea, what zeal! yea, what revenge! In all things he would have approved himself to be clear in this matter."

The ground chiefly relied upon by those who would prove St. Paul to be an ally of the slave-holder is his Epistle to Philemon. Because he does not, in this Epistle, of which he makes Onesimus the bearer, denounce the inherent sinfulness of holding a fellow-creature in slavery, it is assumed at once that he deems it an allowable practice. But nothing, surely, can be more unwarrantable than to take it for granted, that a Christian teacher approves of every practice which he does not, at all times and in every place, whether in season or out of season, formally and expressly condemn. Are we to imagine, for instance, when we hear St. Paul alluding, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, to the sanguinary and indecent celebrations of the Cestus and the Pancratia in the Grecian games, *without one word of censure*, that he therefore approves those cruel and disgusting exhibitions, or considers them as allowable, or endurable, among the followers of a holy Saviour? Why, then, is he to be accused of giving his sanction to slavery, only because he does not expressly condemn it in his letter to Philemon? That he had not already expressed his opinion upon it at Colosse, where Philemon was among the number of his hearers, is more than any one can undertake to affirm: and if he had, the repetition of his censures would have been particularly injudicious and ill-timed, when his object was to *conciliate*, to disarm the resentment and excite the affection of Philemon towards one who, having fled from him as a slave, was returning to him as a "*brother*"—a brother to be "beloved"—"both in the flesh and in the Lord."

But be this as it may, it seems not a little strange, that any one who regards St. Paul in the light of a divinely commissioned Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, should think it possible for him to sanction a practice diametrically opposed to that clearest, simplest, and most comprehensive precept, already quoted, of the Gospel he was commissioned to proclaim: "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." Would you that a fellow-man should by the exercise of force or fraud, make you his *slave*, his *property* his *chattel*, and consign your children after you, to all generations, to the same abject state of degradation and wretchedness? Should you think it *right* in him to do this, so far even as it concerned yourself alone; supposing you had done him no more injury than your unborn children, and were altogether guiltless of any crime that could merit so dreadful a punishment? If you would not, then how can you think that St. Paul, surely not a less righteous man than yourself, could give the sanction of his authority to slavery? to the violation, that is, of the fundamental precept of the Gospel; and of the *second* great commandment of the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Besides, would any one so well acquainted as this Apostle with the statutes and ordinances of the Jewish law, and possessed with so deep a reverence for its moral obligations, think it right, by sending back Onesimus as a slave to his master, to transgress the rule of mercy delivered to the people of the Jews in the xxiiid chapter of Deuteronomy, "*Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee?*" It is inconceivable that the Apostle should fly in the face of so plain and express a command as this, for the sake of re-consigning the freedman of Christ, and the man for whom he himself felt all a father's love, to a species of slavery only surpassed in atrocity by that which is maintained in the colonies of Christian Britain. Accordingly, it is evident from the express terms of the Epistle, that St. Paul did *not* send back Onesimus to Philemon as a slave, but as above a slave, a brother beloved,—a brother not unfit to be associated (as we find in the Epistle to the Colossians he *was* associated) with Tychicus, a minister of the Lord, in the ministerial office of "comforting the hearts" of the Christians at Colosse, and reporting to them all things pertaining to the state of the church of Rome; an office not likely to be deputed to a Grecian *slave*. We see, then, how unjust an imputation is cast on the character of St. Paul by averring that there is any thing in this Epistle to countenance slavery of *any* kind: and as to extracting from it any thing favourable to the continuance of the superlatively cruel and inhuman species of slavery maintained in the dependencies of the British Empire, the attempt appears to be, if possible, less creditable to the understanding than to the heart of those who make it.

With regard to the injunction which the Apostle lays upon converted slaves in some other of his Epistles to shew themselves obedient and submissive to their masters, "that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things," such admonitions cannot in any fairness be construed into an approval of slavery any more than our Lord's injunction, that we turn our left cheek to him who smites us on the right, can be construed into an approval of personal violence. It might not be right for St. Paul, in the very infancy of Christianity, to declare himself the enemy of the civil institutions of the countries in which he was permitted to proclaim its doctrines. Had he done so, and had the slaves been encouraged thereby to attempt the recovery of their liberty, the consequence might have been a servile war of as bloody

a character, and as fatal in the issue to the slaves themselves, as that which was waged under Spartacus against the consular armies of Rome.

That the Apostle did not approve of *men-stealers*, (and what else are all voluntary slave-holders in the British colonies? though our author draws a nice distinction in this matter,) is sufficiently evident from his classing them with the worst and most infamous of criminals. And that he considered the condition of a slave to be a condition in which no Christian ought to remain, but from considerations of "present necessity," is also evident from his making the state of slavery an excepted case in his general rule, that every man should *abide in the same calling wherein he was called.* "Art thou called," says he, "being a servant," care not for it: but, *if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.*" For this particular exception to the general rule he had laid down, he assigns the following weighty reason: "*Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants*" *(slaves)* "*of men;*" which passage Dr. Doddridge has thus paraphrased, "Remember, that, as Christians, you were all bought with a most invaluable price: Christ hath redeemed you at the expense of his own blood; and, therefore, let me caution you out of regard to him, and from a desire to be capable of serving him, as much as possible, that ye do not, where it may by any lawful means be avoided, *become the slaves of men;* since so many evils, and dangers, and snares, are inseparable from such a situation." The note which the same judicious expositor has appended to the words, "Ye are bought with a price," will prove interesting to those readers who are not indifferent to the subject before us. He says, "Dr. Whitby would render it, '*Are you bought with a price*—that is, redeemed from servitude? *Become not servants of men;* do not sell yourselves for slaves again.' It is indeed probable, that the *Apostle* does counsel *Christians* against becoming *slaves*, if it could be prevented; and with great reason, as it was a circumstance which seemed less suitable to the dignity of the *Christian* professor, and must expose them to many incumbrances and interruptions in duty, especially on the *Lord's-day*, and other seasons of religious assemblies; besides the danger of being present at domestic *idolatrous* sacrifices, or being ill-used if they refused their compliance. But I cannot thoroughly approve of the *Doctor's Version*, because the advice is unnecessarily restrained thereby, to those slaves who had been redeemed; which plainly, as well suited those who had their freedom given them, and indeed suited all *Christians*, who never had been at all *slaves*, and who might more easily have been prevailed upon, by their poverty, to bring themselves into a condition, the evils and inconveniences of which they did not thoroughly know."

We would not willingly accuse our author of hypocrisy, and yet there is something very like hypocrisy in such passages as the following.

"Has the Christian advocate of colonial emancipation 'fully persuaded' himself, that the slave will be brought nearer to God by the power with which he wishes to invest him of shaking off his share in the 'primal curse?' Has not the sentence gone forth, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground?' Is it not the decree of an Apostle, that 'if any man will not work, neither should he eat?' How, then, can it be supposed that a life of sloth, or profligacy, or marauding, will make 'the means of grace' more accessible, or bring him within the pale of the Christian covenant? Is the experiment of the free labour of uncivilized Negroes yet to be tried?" p. 24.

"The liberty chiefly desired by the untutored Negro, is liberty to be idle; he scarcely values freedom, but as he supposes it to emancipate him from the obligation of labour. The wants of savage nature are few:—clothing is no great desideratum under a vertical sun—a straw hut is easily constructed—and the means of subsistence not very difficult to obtain;—but occasional plunder or theft is a mode of support more consonant to the

savage taste, than a course of uninteresting, honest labour, however easy." p. 25.

"Let not the heavenly-minded Christian, whose chief obje[illegible] ought to be the glory of God in the salv[illegible]ion of his fellowmen, make common cause with the Sadducean politician of this world;—but while he deprecates the serious evil that must arise from increasing the colonial prejudices against religious instruction, and fostering a hostile feeling in a relation of life, recognised in the primitive church, and permitted to the present day by Divine Providence, let the 'man of God' (until 'the signs of the times' become more evident) be content to address the slave in the language of an Apostle, 'Art thou called being a slave, care not for it.'" p. 26.

We say that such passages bear a hypocritical aspect; because they profess to advocate the Negro's spiritual advantage at the expense of his natural rights and physical condition. "Why do you grind me down by oppressive labour? why keep me your slave?" "Why? for your own good, for the glory of God, and the fulfilment of Scripture. The Bible says, In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread: you would escape from this sentence, would you? No; trust us 'heavenly-minded Christians' for that: we will take care Scripture shall not be broken; sweat you shall; we have the lash ever ready in our hands: our chief object is, 'the glory of God in the salvation of our fellow-men:' sugar is a mere trifle; we wish to keep you within the pale of the Christian covenant; therefore to your tasks; ye are idle, ye are idle; you would shake off the primal curse; you have few wants, and are content with a little; well, well, if you do not wish to sweat for yourselves, sooner than the Bible shall be falsified you shall for us. Your condition is recognized by Divine providence, and we will not alter it to please 'the Sadducean politicians of this world.'"—Is not all this utterly base, hollow, and hypocritical? The whole of the extract we have last quoted is a tissue of falsehoods and fallacies. What "Christian advocate of colonial emancipation" ever wished that any race of men should live in idleness or theft? "If any man will not work neither shall he eat." This is the voice of philanthropy as well as of religion. Let the slaves be free villagers, and work, and be paid fairly for their labours. If their wants are few, you have no right to make them slaves because yours are many. At present you have debased them till they have no wants at all beyond those of the lowest animal indulgence; this is your fault, not theirs; if they were free they would soon gain a taste for the comforts of free persons, and work to procure them; and if not, that is their affair, not yours; you have made labour odious to them; they see in it the badge of disgrace, as well as feel the pressure of inordinate toil; you have made them more helpless and improvident than children, and then you blame them for it, and make it an excuse to do the same by their children. You talk sneeringly of their "lazy pride;" but lazy pride is not confined to Negroes; it is a White and a Creole vice; their masters have their full share of this noxious compound; and to make them diligent and humble, you are to make them work for your benefit, that you may commute their "primal sweat" into sugar, and sugar into claret and turtle, and seats in parliament, and purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day. And all this under pretence of love to their souls. You keep them, forsooth, "within the pale of the Christian covenant;" you are not "Sadducean politicians:" no; you fulfil Scripture, and your chief object is "the glory of God in the salvation of your fellow-men."

Among the other fallacies in the last quoted extract, there is one which runs throughout the pamphlet, and throughout the reasoning and conduct of some of our missionary societies; namely, that of applying in reference to one party what the Scriptures speak only in reference to another. Take, for instance, the last line of the ex-

tract, "Art thou called being a slave, care not for it." This is a blessed injunction to the poor slave, that seeing he is in this miserable and, as to the world, hopeless condition, he should not add to his discomforts or offend his Heavenly Father by a repining spirit; but rather cheer himself with those heavenly consolations which are within his reach, and which the feeble arm of his oppressor cannot exclude. But how unjust and disingenuous is it to apply such passages for the defence of the master, instead of for the consolation of the slave! To our minds nothing can be more fatal to the argument for slavery than such Scripture exhortations to the poor victim of oppression. They imply the cheerlessness of his lot, and the injustice and barbarity of his oppressor; and yet the latter turns round, and says, "Because the Apostle consoles my victim, he approves of my tyranny." Suppose a brutal miscreant of a husband were to say, "The Apostle could not disapprove of my beating my wife, for he taught wives to submit themselves to their husbands!" Yet is not this precisely the same argument that is used when the injunctions of the Apostle to slaves are pleaded in favour of slavery?

No, it is a sordid debasing self-interest only, and not religion or humanity, that can be pleaded in favour of the system. Our Mauritius Resident unwittingly admits this. For example:

"The cry of emancipation may be re-echoed along the shores of Great Britain, and his fellow-subjects may expatiate in their generous excitement on the charitable act of liberating his slaves, and the hymn of triumph may be raised in anticipation of the deed, and self-complacency may smile delighted at the prospect of its accomplishment—*cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator!* But cheap as this offering upon the altar of benevolence may be to them; *the costly sacrifice of his daily maintenance, and the support of his dependent family, and the patrimony of his beloved children,* cannot reasonably be expected as a 'free-will offering' from him. The dreaded innovation may appear, to the speculative and distant philanthropist, in the angel form of a rational and benevolent project; but upon the affrighted colonist, it glares as a ghastly apparition denouncing coming ruin, and the harbinger even of death itself!" p. 29.

Here is the plain fact. The colonist has bought stolen goods, knowing them to be stolen, and finds it expensive to restore them. He has provided for "his daily maintenance, and the support of his dependent family, and the patrimony of his beloved children," out of the toil and blood of wretched captives, torn from their homes without any crime of theirs, to amass him a fortune; and he finds it inconvenient to cease to live by oppression. When our author dragged in religion, we felt indignant at the outrage; but when he writes as in the last quoted passage, we make every allowance for his prejudices, if not his interests. The slave system is cruel and wicked—but it is supposed to be gainful. We do not believe that in the end, and on a large scale, it *is* gainful: it offers a few splendid prizes, but the majority of its abettors draw only blanks; the curse of God is upon their concerns, and the bankrupt and beggared condition of the West Indies proves that slave-holding is usually in the result but splendid poverty. But allow it to be as gainful as it is wicked; what then? Because it is gainful, and affords to a few White men "daily maintenance," and "the support of a family," and "patrimony for their beloved children," it is to be maintained at whatever sacrifice to their miserable victims. The Resident talks piteously of "costly sacrifice," and the tale is echoed on every side: but whose sacrifice is greatest? that of the man who gives up what never by the laws of God was his own, what he had no claim to but might above right, what his "dependent family" and "beloved children" had no just warrant to expect should fill a blood-stained purse for their advantage; or that of hundreds of abject, helpless unoffending captives, dragged from wives and home, and parents and children, to wear

out their life in interminable labours and bitter stripes, for his benefit?

But we will not condescend to reason on such a point. We have all reasoned too much and too long; and slaves are dying, and new ones are born to their inheritance of tears, while no progress is made for the final extinction of the unhallowed system. We have reasoned enough: let us act. The colonies laugh at our reasonings—but they will quail before an unanimous parliament and an unanimous people, embodying their reasonings in intelligible acts. Let us sound in their ears one word, and one word only,—not mitigation—not merely religious instruction—not gradual preparation for freedom, but—EMANCIPATION; the utter abolition of the whole system, root and branch. When and where we see an honest desire for this, we are willing to entertain fair and honourable, nay liberal terms of capitulation; but not when we perceive that all the outcry about religion and amelioration is to stave off abolition. Our author says,

"Let the mind of the colonist be tranquillized by a distinct assurance that the views of the British Government, and of the persons who agitate this question in England, are confined to the prevention of cruelty and oppression; in a word, to the *amelioration of slavery*;—and that the recent regulations adopted for that end are not the precursors of any ulterior measures, that would involve him in poverty and ruin. Until this be done; the felicities of life, and the joys of the social circle, and the blessing of a bounteous Providence upon his honest labour, can seem but as the luxury and splendour that surrounded the affrighted Damocles. But if this assurance were distinctly pledged: we might then hope, that no disapprobation would be shown of laws that commend themselves to the best dictates of human nature; —that feelings of jealousy and alarm would gradually subside, and give place to a confidence, and a calm benignity, that would shed the happiest influence upon the slave population, and transform the suspicious and irritated proprietor into a sincere and effectual co-operator with the friend of the Negro." pp. 29, 30.

We will not attempt to "tranquillize" our author or his friends with any such assurance. We wish them to understand quite the contrary; that we aim, and aim pointedly and specifically, at what they most dread—not merely the amelioration but the utter abolition of slavery. After the experience of the last forty years, we should as soon expect to ameliorate piracy or prescribe bounds to the ravages of a hurricane. The sword of Damocles, or rather of a just retributive Providence, is over "the luxury and splendour" that surround the willing slave-holder; not however to pierce him, but to liberate the victims of his oppression. If this pierce him, he has to thank slavery, and not those who would extirpate it, for the painfulness of his situation.

Our Resident hopes for much, for all that is desirable, from the good feeling of the colonial slaveholders. We hope for little, for nothing; and the less so as he has chosen for the scene of his panegyric the Mauritius—that most foul and blood-stained den of the grim giant of slavery. He says:

"As the conviction is universal, that the master's interest is identified with the welfare of the slave; it is hoped that the spontaneous dictates of generous sentiment, as well as the motive of personal advantage, will incline the inhabitants of the Mauritius to pursue the course of improvement." p. 27.

We have no such hopes: they will struggle to the last in support of their oppressions; and if the victim is to escape, he must be snatched from their grasp. How little we can trust to the "generous sentiment" of the Mauritius, in the matter of slavery, may be seen in the frightful picture of its horrors, in the Anti Slavery Reporter already alluded to.

Slavery has no present tense in cruelty. Even in the Mauritius, though the pages are scarcely dry that have recorded a sample of its horrors, our author can complacently talk of past times and present amendment. He says,

"We are willing to confess that *in former years*, when slaves could be easily replaced, and before the mighty influence

of public opinion had been felt, a harsher system may have prevailed. Perhaps it was the feculent result of that moral tornado, the French Revolution, which, if it purified the political atmosphere from some stagnant and noxious exhalations, shook to the base all civil order, and certainly made wide havoc with the religious and social affections of a large portion of mankind: for anterior to that memorable epoch, the system appears to have been almost as patriarchal and humane, as the 'Code Noir' of the French kings would lead us to imagine. And we do not dispute that individual cases of cruelty have occurred; for where is that community of the descendants of Adam which has not been tainted with more or less crime? But as that would not be a correct statistic report of the present state of England, which should be drawn from the documents of preceding years;—or that, a true moral estimate of the state of society, which should be formed solely from the police reports and the Newgate Calendar;—so, neither is it just, nor according to the law of Christian charity, that insulated examples of crime, and the abuses of former years, should be made the basis of that sweeping reprobation of the actual state of colonial slavery which is so prevalent in the present day." pp. 47, 48.

It was very wise and politic not only to post-date the atrocities of Mauritius slavery, but to lay them to the account of the French Revolution. Pity it was that that tremendous concussion, which destroyed so much else, should have destroyed the delightful milkiness of slavery, and infused gall into its sweetness. But the French Revolution being every where obnoxious, may very adroitly be made to bear this odium, so as to shelter all slave-owners under legitimate governments, and especially the present race, who have always "one eternal now" of exemption from reproach, being, for the time being, all that is good and humane, till the next generation finds that the glossy surface contained a foul interior, and the immaculate epoch is again post-dated. But in truth this reference to the French Revolution is most unfair and invidious, and seems introduced to cast a sidelong slur on the abolitionists, as if *they* also wished "to shake to the base all civil order, and to make wide havoc with the religious and social affections of mankind." However, we will very frankly tell our author, that if West-Indian and Mauritius slavery is a part of his code of "civil order," the abolitionists *do* wish and intend to subvert it; and the downfal will be the more certain and effectual, as they are not like the atheists and madmen of the French Revolution, but men as much attached both to "civil order" and to "the religious and social affections," as the best slave-master in the Mauritius. There may be "Sadducean politicians," who take up the same cause; but the cause itself is not the worse because it has been profanely touched. It is the cause of religion and of human nature; and it is asserted by all that is wise, and holy, and enlightened among mankind. The people of Great Britain and Ireland, with their fellow-Christians throughout the world, will forgive the sneer about the French Revolution, and pursue their glorious purpose as if nothing had happened.

One word more on the last extract. The author makes cruelty only the exception, and good treatment the rule of slavery; but all history, all experience, all knowledge of the human character is against him. Besides, is not injustice itself cruelty? is not the seminal principle of slavery cruelty? if wounds, and stripes, and mutilations, and tortures, and eventual murders occurred but seldom, instead of occurring as they do constantly, would there be no cruelty in making men mere beasts of burden, chattels, agricultural implements, things without rights, or privileges, or even a will of their own, and subject to all the caprice and tyranny of whoever chooses to offer the best price for them? Our author accounts nothing of a breaking heart, if the skin be not lacerated: Negroes are "happily," he says, not susceptible in matters of feeling: but even this degrading plea does not avail; for lacerated they are, basely, barbarously, and often beyond endurance. Those who have

not seen a Mauritius field-whip, will start in their dreams the night after they have witnessed this horrible engine of infliction, this prime support of "civil order" and "religious and social affections."

But where is the community, asks our author, which has not been tainted with more or less crime. Where indeed? But this is no good reason for continuing to promote it by means of a system of iniquity from which it is inseparable. Besides, there is this vast difference: the annals of Newgate are the annals of the vilest and most profligate of the community; the most degraded self-banished outcasts from the pale of virtuous society: they stand at the bar of their country as criminals; and Newgate is their prison house, and the tread-mill, the hulks, or the gallows their portion; but the perpetrators or abettors of the cruelties which have been brought to light in the Mauritius, and other slave colonies, are men and women who take rank in their community, often the high castes of the place, and never of necessity the customary tenants of a gaol. Besides, these wrong-doers are not flattered and encouraged in their deeds: if England has a miscreant she finds stocks and fetters to fit him, or perhaps, in her criminal severity, too hastily rids herself of him for ever. But in our slave colonies the community takes part with the culprit: he is a martyr to European prejudices. While Esther Hibner struggles into eternity at Newgate, amidst the execrations of an applauding mob, the Mosses of a slave colony are caressed, and feasted, and petitioned for "by all the respectable people" of the place. Here then is the difference: it is not "insulated examples of crime," or "the abuses of former years;" but crime present, perpetual, and inevitable; crime not "insulated," but crime perpetrated or abetted by "the most respectable people," and forming the average staple of colonial morality. The Resident will, of course, not allow this: well then, blot it out of the indictment; and we return to our position, that slavery itself is a crime—an atrocious and blood-stained crime; and this at least, we are confident, he cannot disprove, if either justice, or humanity, or Christianity, is to be the umpire.

There is, as we have before remarked, a strange jumble of God and mammon in this pamphlet. The author professes to defend his fellow-colonists upon principle; but in the details self-interest is sure to discover itself. He will not yield slavery to religion or humanity; no, this would break "civil order," and violate "the religious and social affections:" the deposit is too sacred to be touched for considerations like these; but money it seems will purchase the boon,—for he says very gravely,

> "The writer does not hesitate to express his conviction, that if the planter had a fair compensation for the value of his slaves, and a security for the continuance of public tranquillity with such an immense preponderance of the free Black population; and that the liberated slaves would work for a reasonable remuneration, calculated from a comparison of the price of food, and the ordinary rate of living of the working classes in Europe;—he would not care if they were all emancipated to-morrow!" p. 37.

The writer might well "feel no hesitation in expressing this conviction." We would express it of a crew of pirates, or a troop of banditti, or a nest of coiners, thieves, or smugglers. The advocate for the smuggler, for instance, might say to the anti-smuggling society of revenue cruizers, that he did not hesitate to express his opinion that if the smuggler had only a fair compensation for the value of his boat and cargo, with a promise of a guard round his house (this being, however, in both cases equally unnecessary), and a pledge that he shall gain as much by honest silks and brandies, as by contraband, he would not care if he ceased being a smuggler to-morrow. But would the nation stipulate to allow these terms, and

uphold him till he obtained them; as little, nay, less, will honest men concede the preposterous requisitions of the Mauritius Resident. Be just first; let the oppressed go free, or at least shew a disposition to do so, and then it will be time enough to settle the terms of the barter. We are anxious that not only justice, but liberality should be exercised (though we by no means admit that the nation at large are bound very seriously to make restitution, since they were deceived by the colonists, and were not interested abettors of the crime); but then this justice or liberality must be grounded on a full prospect of emancipation, and not on those deceitful half measures which sound well and mean nothing.

We were closing the pamphlet when our eye glanced on the name of Dr. Philip, accompanied by a censure upon his unqualified language in speaking of the debasing effects of slavery upon the master as well as the slave. We thank the Mauritius Resident for reminding us of the debt of gratitude due to that faithful and excellent man. The vituperation that has assailed him in the slave colonies is his highest honour, next to that Divine approval which we doubt not has accompanied his deed; a deed performed in the true character of a Christian missionary, the servant of Him who came to open the doors of the prison to them that are bound. Tyrants yet unborn will tremble at the name of this firm uncompromising yet unpretending friend of the friendless. No art was left untried to turn him from his purpose; but he persisted, and he attained his high object,—an object second only to the actual liberation of those already in slavery, and necessary to prevent the clandestine increase of their number. He attained even more than he asked, and the blessings which he implored for South Africa have been extended to all the crown colonies. Here is ample encouragement for the friends of the despised slave: only let them persevere firmly, unitedly, and without compromise, and the result is certain. The Resident may rest assured that the nation is beginning to be in earnest on the subject. They have been deluded and cajoled too long; but the voice of their brother's blood now cries from the ground too loudly to admit of slumber, and they will not be deluded much longer.

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